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Research Brief

School-based Child Care

Question: What does the research say about school-based child care?

Summary of Findings:

Each year, half a million teenagers become mothers in the United States. School-based child care programs are a positive way for educational institutions to encourage young mothers to return to or stay in school, prepare for employment, and acquire accurate information about child development and appropriate parenting practices. Nationwide, school-based child-care centers are increasing in number and are used to meet a variety of needs: They give teenage mothers an incentive to stay in school, and students interested in working with babies and young children get practical experience by changing diapers, resolving disputes over toys, and writing lesson plans. For some schools, career education is the main objective for operating child-care facilities. And in some cases, the centers provide on-site child care for teachers and other school employees.

Evidence suggests:

- When there are child care centers in public high schools, teen-age parents whose children attend the facility are more likely to complete their education and less likely to become dependent on welfare.
- Schools benefit through lower dropout rates, improved parent education programs, vocational training for students, and increased performance from faculty who enroll their children in the facility.
- Communities profit from having a lower number of welfare participants; more efficient use of public health, nutrition, and social services; and more accessible high quality child care.
- The child care profession gains trained professionals, and all the children involved benefit from a high quality preschool education.

Online Resources:

Transition to Motherhood in Teen Mothers in High School: Preliminary Findings

The purpose of this ongoing descriptive study is to explore the transition to motherhood in adolescent mothers attending a large urban high school in New Haven with an on site parent support program and a school-based child care center. The first study aim is to examine the relationships among personal resources of the student-mothers, perceived environmental sources of stress and support, and student-mothers' parental competence and child health and developmental outcomes. The second study aim is to describe student-mothers' patterns of continued enrollment or graduation from high school, and subsequent childbearing in the sample. It appears that the urban adolescent mothers attending high school who are enrolled in an on-site parenting support program manifest positive parenting attitudes and behaviors, and the children enrolled in the child care center manifest positive development and health outcomes. The NCATS mother-child relationship scores were particularly impressive, especially in the subanalyses of cognitive growth fostering interactions between mothers and their children. The students with children enrolled in the school-based child care center have



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benefited with respect to their ability to complete or continue their high school education. With respect to delaying subsequent child births their rate of 12% of subsequent childbearing compares very favorably with much higher numbers (40%) reported in other studies.

Lois S. Sadler, Martha Kirk Swartz, Patricia Ryan-Krause, Mikki Meadows, Victoria Seitz, Margaret Grey,

Yale University School of Nursing

http://www.uwgnh.org/docs/prelim_findings_11_26_abstract.doc

Effects of an Urban High School-Based Child Care Center on Self-Selected Adolescent Parents and Their Children.

Examined the impact of an urban, high school-based day care center on low-income parenting teens and their children. Retrospective record reviews indicated that participating students showed improvement in overall grade point average. All students graduated or were promoted to the next grade. No participants experienced repeat pregnancies. Most children were current on immunizations and healthcare.

Williams, Elizabeth Gillis; Sadler, Lois S.

Journal of School Health v71 n2 p47-52 Feb 2001

<http://behavior.bettergpa.com/behavior-resources/teen-parents-and-child-care-and-school.html#>

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